

\*\*\*\*\*December 21, 2020\*\*\*\*\*

The Signal Mountain Town Council met as the Water Utility Board on Monday, December 21, 2020. The meeting was held electronically and was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Those present were:

Those present were: Mayor Charles Poss  
Councilmember Vicki Anderson  
Councilmember Andrew Gardner  
Councilmember Dan Landrum

Also present were: Town Manager Boyd Veal  
Town Attorney Harry Cash  
Finance Director/Town Recorder Carol White

Mayor Poss led the pledge of allegiance.

### **Overview of Meter Upgrade Project**

Water Utility Director, Adam Chrnalogar, informed the Board that 98.7% of meters have been replaced. He explained that while all residential and irrigation meters have been replaced, some larger meters (i.e., for Alexian, restaurants and Pruitts) still need to be done. Mr. Chrnalogar said that in the past it has taken 5 employees approximately 520 hours to read meters, the last reading took 2 employees 8 hours. Mr. Chrnalogar said there are still problems with the billing software.

### **Staffing**

Mr. Chrnalogar proposed a new organizational chart for the Water Department to the Board (copy attached). He said there are additional technology needs due to the new system. In addition, he said there is a deficiency in electrical knowledge. He said the new organization will result in reassignments for some current employees. He said this would be paid for from the savings from the retirement of a senior staff member and not filling that administrative position. The Board also discussed how to best use the residence located at the pump station.

### **Ongoing and Upcoming Projects**

- a. **SCADA Optimization.** Mr. Chrnalogar explained that the implementation and upgrades to the Town's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system continues. He is now able to monitor the tank levels 24/7 and receive alerts if tank levels fall below certain marks. He also said that the water system needs to upgrade or replace several pumps. He said the pumps can be very expensive.
- b. **Pump Station Repairs/Improvements.** Mr. Chrnalogar said that the pumps at the pump station need to be repaired with the focus on new starters. He said this is most likely to cost \$6-7,000.00 each. Mr. Chrnalogar said the booster station at the top of the mountain

is not being used because it needs costly repairs. He is investigating what is needed to return that unit to service.

- c. Tank Maintenance. Mr. Chrnalogar informed the Council that he is opposed to continuing the Town's tank maintenance agreements due to their high cost. He explained that these costs continue to increase each year. The Board held extensive discussions regarding the escalating costs and how the contracts are structured, with pre-payment requirements. Mr. Veal said that when the Town entered into these contracts many years previous, they were a lot less costly and therefore were most likely very advantageous to the Town. However, now that so many years have passed, Mr. Veal stated that staff will evaluate the benefits vs the rising costs. Mayor Poss requested that Mr. Chrnalogar provide an update with more information in January.
- d. Water Main Projects Maintenance. Mr. Chrnalogar provided several maps to the Board (copies attached) that show the systems lines, hydrants and junction pressure. He said that the Town is losing water due to the fact that old galvanized pipes are deteriorating. Mr. Veal said that the Town is hoping to decrease the next scheduled rate increase to the customers due to cost savings related to system improvements.

Mr. Chrnalogar also informed the Board that he is stopping the use of Walden's Ridge Utility District for testing of water samples due to the high costs of materials and testing. He has made arrangements with Tennessee American Water (TAW) for these services. He said that TAW is currently doing this service for free, other than supplies.

### **COVID Procedures**

Mr. Veal reminded the Board that, due to Covid-19, the water department has not been charging customers any late fees and is not performing disconnects. After discussion, the Board agreed to continue this practice.

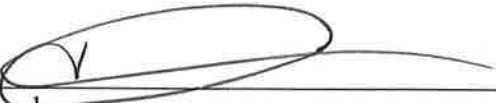
### **Other Business**

Mr. Veal said that staffing is normally reviewed by Council during the budget process. He said that savings in the current budget will finance the proposed staffing changes discussed at this meeting. He asked to confirm that the Board was agreeable to the changes. The Board had no objections or concerns regarding the proposed re-organization.

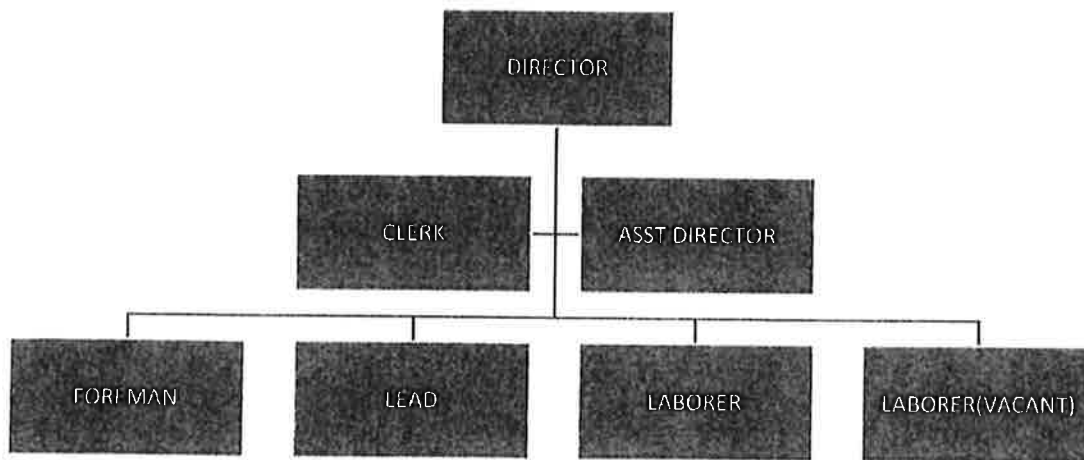
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

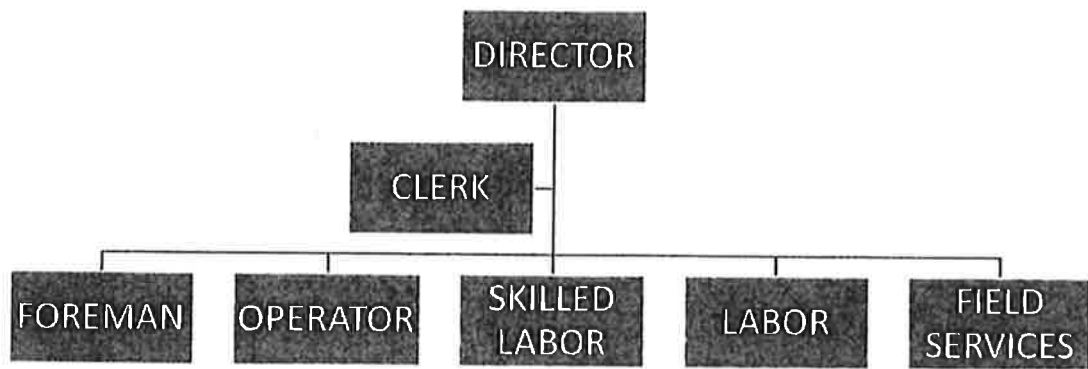
A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C. Poss', written above a horizontal line.

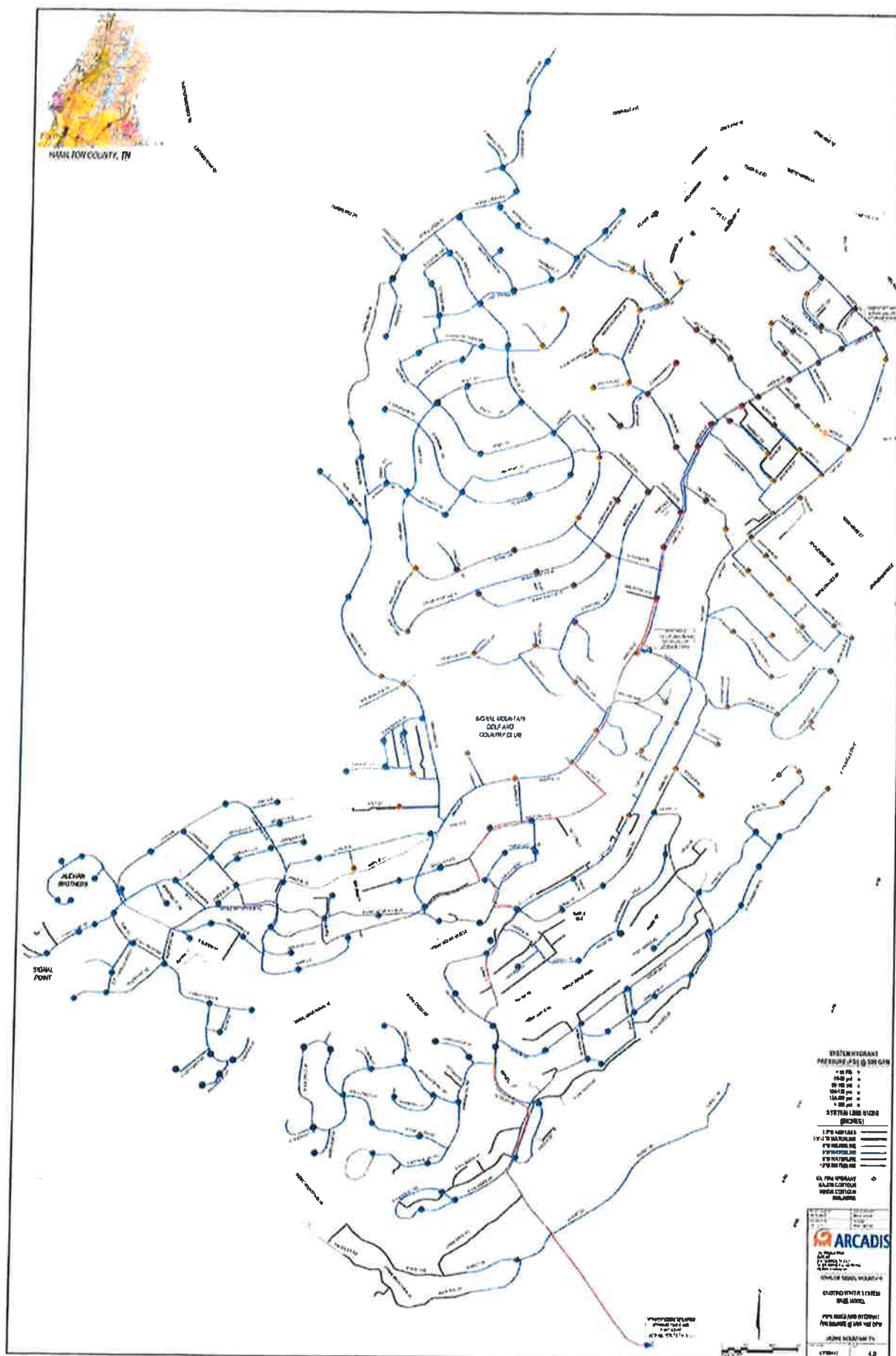
Charles Poss, Mayor

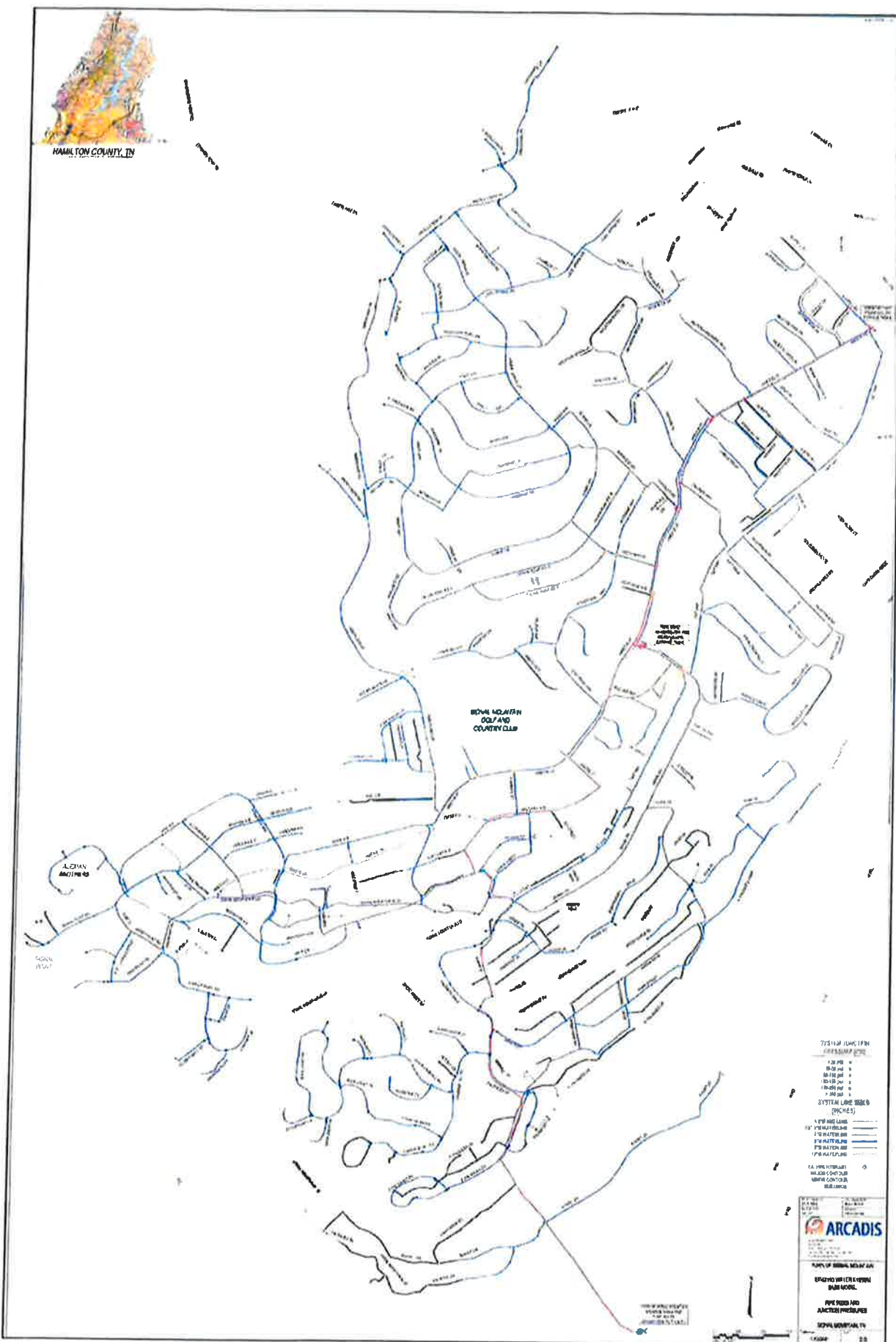
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Recorder





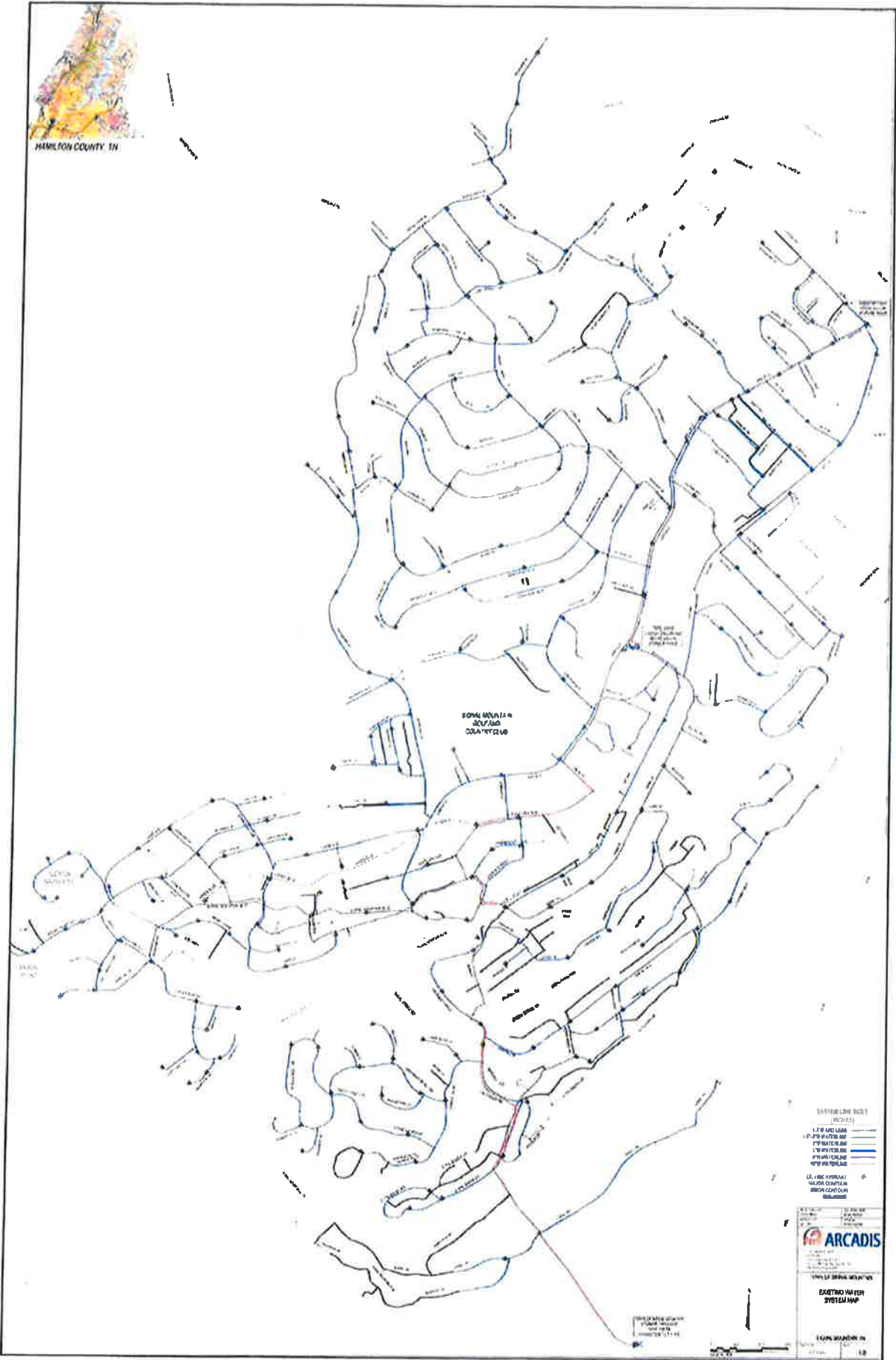








HAMILTON COUNTY, TN



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Eastmo Water System  
System Map

Scale: 1" = 1000'